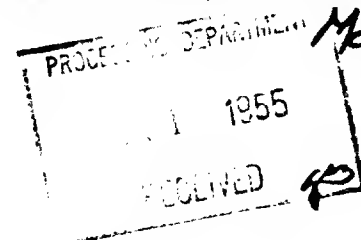


Oct. 17, 1955

M. Ditch
Pub. Procurement,
Moscow

Mr. Lewis C. Coffin
Assistant Director
Processing Department
Library of Congress
Washington 25, DC.



Dear Lewis:

To bring you up to date on my activities, for the past three weeks I have been travelling without interruption (this explains why you have received no letter from me for some time.)

My travels break down into two trips: the first to Central Asia and the second to Kiev and the Caucasus. Since I was delayed a day and half in returning from Central Asia to Moscow because of faulty plane connections I had only a few hours here before leaving for the second trip to Kiev and the ~~Caucasus~~ Caucasus, for which I had already ordered my ticket before going to Central Asia. I barely had time to draw my money, change my clothes and catch the train; there was simply no opportunity to write.

On the first trip I visited Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara and Alma Ata. All of these stops, except Bukhara, were for purposes of buying books and contacting the local universities and academies. The trip to Bukhara was an afterthought, and undertaken only because I had a days wait in Tashkent for a plane to Alma Ata and decided to use the time visiting Bukhara. The visit to Tashkent was very rewarding. Among the provincial cities it is one of the largest book publishing centers, and both the university and the Academy of Sciences are very active. In all these respects Tashkent is much more important than the other Central Asian republican capitals. In the academic book store and in the most important general book store I bought all that was ~~xxxxx~~ available of the local publications. The visits to the Central Asian State University - the largest and most important in Central Asia - and the Uzbek Academy of Sciences were even more rewarding. At present the university has exchanges only with a very few American institutions and on a very small scale, while the Academy of Sciences has no such exchanges at all. Both are desirous of instituting substantial and direct exchanges with American libraries. The Academy of Sciences ~~me~~ promised me to send you two volumes as an opener. The way the offer came to be made is this: in the academic book store I had bought vol. 2 of a three volume edition of "Descriptions of Medieval Uzbek Manuscripts", volumes one and three not being available. At the Academy Library I asked if they had extra copies; they did and promised to send copies of vols. 1 and three to you and Harvard. I also asked for sets of a multivolume "History of the Uzbek Peoples" published by the Uzbek Academy of Sciences a few years ago, and they promised to send this also to you and Harvard. I don't know whether or not you have these works; I rather think not, given their dates of publication; also I have Professor Fryer (of Harvard) that Harvard does not have them, so you most probably don't have them either. The Uzbek Academy requested nothing in particular in exchange, primarily because they are in total ignorance of what is being published in America; it has literally been years ~~xxxxxx~~ since they have received any

American publications. What they wanted most was to ~~start~~ start receiving American bibliographies, such as US Quarterly Book Review. I didn't commit you to anything specific, of course, beyond saying that you were interested in exchanges and that you would soon write making an offer, and they are expecting a letter with an offer, and perhaps a number or two of the US Quarterly Book Review. With respect to what you should expect in the way of exchanges with them, the output of the Uzbek Academy is fairly large. Unfortunately I was unable to get a ~~pro~~ prospectus of their editions, either from the academy book store or the Academy Library, since no such ~~pro~~ prospectus exists. However, a list of all their publications since the founding of the Academy is at present in press, and is scheduled to appear before the end of the year. They promised to send it to you, with indications of what they still have available for exchange. In addition, the books ~~that~~ bought in the store will give you some indication of their output, ~~when they reach you~~. The only address you need is Library of the Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR, Tashkent, Uzbek SSR. S. R.

At the university in Tashkent the reception, if anything, was even better. Unlike most Soviet provincial universities, the Central Asiatic university publishes a rather amount of material. They gave me two catalogues, one covering their publications from 1922 to 1950 and the other a list of their Doctoral and Masters theses from 1936 to 1951, representing both published and unpublished material. A new and more up to date catalogue of their publications is in preparation and will be sent to you as soon as it is ready. The first catalogue is the more interesting, since it gives a complete list of articles appearing in their periodicals, and at the end of the pamphlet a list of their publications available on exchange. I will send along these two catalogues with the next shipment of books. From what I was told their publishing activity ~~has~~ expanded greatly in the last five years, an assertion you will better ~~be~~ able to evaluate when you receive their latest catalogue. All these publications, of course, you can get on exchange. However, the most interesting part of the discussion was the following. Tashkent turned out to be willing to do what the University of Kazan refused to do, that is to subscribe to local non-university publications in return for subscriptions to such American ~~and~~ publications as the New York Times, Herald Tribune, Foreign Affairs etc. They also agreed to buy locally published books on request in return for requests that they would make of American libraries. I know such an agreement interests Harvard, and therefore committed Harvard in general to such an exchange. As regards LC and the other universities I simply said that ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ they might be interested. It all depends on their appetite for Central Asian books and periodicals. I know that some of these periodicals, particularly newspapers, can be bought from Mezhniga; unfortunately I do not know which ones, therefore it was impossible for me to say exactly what ones Harvard wanted. I will write Harvard today or tomorrow about the general nature of the agreement, and Harvard can request the specific Central ~~Asian~~ Asian publications it desires from Tashkent. The Central Asian University in turn wants to receive the New York Times, The New York Herald Tribune, the Washington Post, Foreign Affairs, Pacific Affairs, Current History. I don't know whether such an exchange interests you; with respect to LC I only told them that you were interested in general in receiving their publications and that they would hear from you shortly. I also will inform the other five universities of Tashkent's willingness to

~~xxxxxxx~~ institute direct exchanges.

After Tashkent I went to Samarkand, which has the second largest university in Central Asia, however, the results of the trip were very disappointing. The rector of the university was away in Tashkent ~~the~~ when I called, and the director of the library was out picking cotton! It is normal in most Soviet educational institutions, in particular the smaller ones, for students and a part of the faculty to help with the harvest this way. All I could find out at the library was that the university had published nothing for the last year. At the book store there were no university publications. The case of Samarkand is I think rather typical of the smaller Soviet universities, and bears out the impression I received at Gorkii (and later at Rostov). Such places are small as ~~xxxxx~~ institutions, publish little and in general count for much less than institutions of corresponding size in America. Most of the writings ~~xxx~~ of the faculty do not appear under university ~~xx~~ auspices but in one or another Academy of Science ^{pub-}lication or monograph, either in Moscow or Leningrad, or in the republican ~~xxx~~ capitals, particularly, Tashkent, Kiev and Tiflis. After Samarkand I went to ~~xx~~ Bukhara, simply sight-seeing, since I had a day to kill before I could get a plane for Alma ~~x~~ Ata.

In Alma ~~xxx~~ Ata the visit to the university was disappointing; the visit to the Academy ~~xxxxxxx~~ of Sciences was very satisfactory. The ~~xxxxx~~ Kazakhstan State University, as it is called, has only one publication, its Uchenye Zapiski, which it ^would to exchange, but this is all. With regards to ~~xxxxxxx~~ helping us get local non-university publications in return for American periodicals and journals they were non-committal. The explanation I think lies in the fact that they are smaller than Tashkent and that ~~xxxx~~ no one on the faculty is particularly interested in receiving any particular American newspaper or periodical. (In Tashkent the history people were particularly eager to receive such material and that is why they agreed to help us.) Since such subscribing to local publications not put out by the university is not accepted procedure in Soviet educational ~~xxxxxx~~ institutions, there has to be faculty pressure to make the library go out of its way to do this. This was quite clear in Tashkent where the head librarian did not like the idea but where the rector and the dean of the history faculty were quite willing. The visit to the ~~xxxxx~~ Kazakh ~~x~~ Academy of Sciences was more rewarding. They put out a fair number of publications, although less than ~~Tashkent~~ the Uzbek Academy, and they are most ~~xx~~ eager to make exchanges with America as big as possible. Like the people in Tashkent they are at present receiving very little from America in general and no bibliographies in particular, so they don't know very well what they want. What they have to offer is the whole spread~~xx~~ of their own publications. Unfortunately the first catalogue of these publications will not be out till the end of this year so I couldn't get a copy of it, but they will send it to you and the universities as soon ~~xx~~ as it appears. They requested that the universities send them their catalogues and that LC send them some comprehensive ~~xx~~ national bibliography. I told them that I would inform each of the libraries I represented of their willingness to exchange directly and they are expecting letters from you and the universities and hope to have exchanges operating by the first of the year. They also agreed, if you are willing, to exchange on a unit for unit basis, rather than dollar for dollar. I mentioned this only because Harvard

prefers it this way, but I did not commit anyone but Harvard. (I believe that your exchanges with the Lenin Library are on this basis also, so perhaps you would want to adopt the same procedure with the Kazakhs). Their address is simply AN Kazakhskoi SSR, Alma Ata, Kazakhstan, USSR. The address of the university is Kazakhskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet, Alma Ata. The address of the university in Tashkent is Sredne-Aziatskii Universitet, Biblioteka, Tashkent, Uzbekskaya SSR, USSR. I might add in conclusion that all of these institutions were delighted and touched by my visit and very eager to start exchanging. They only very recently received permission, or rather instructions, to exchange with foreign institutions, and don't seem to know very well how to go about doing it, since with the exception of the university in Tashkent, they are all too young to have had exchanges before the war. Therefore they are eagerly awaiting your first letter with concrete proposals as to what to do; I doubt very much whether they have a clear enough picture of American book production or the names and location of American libraries to take the initiative themselves. They are expecting the initiative to come from us, and the only commitment I made (except in the case of Harvard) was that LC and the other libraries would all write soon. Finally I might add that all of these institutions are very young: Tashkent University 1922; the Uzbek Academy 1946 or thereabouts; the Kazakh Academy 1947. So far their book output has not been very great (this is one of the reasons why we haven't been getting it). But they are all growing very fast and their book output is going to increase correspondingly. Both the Uzbek and the Kazakh Academies are building new libraries, and both their demand for books and their output is growing very fast. Therefore we haven't missed very much so far by not exchanging with them, but this is rapidly ceasing to be true.

One final word in closing. Yesterday I sent you a cable requesting answers to two questions put me some time ago by the Lenin Library. The reason for this is that both of these questions are of very great importance to them and I feel I have to give them some sort of answer soon unless I am to ~~lose~~ appear in their eyes as an impostor or a fraud, which I fear would have a bad effect on your relations with them just at the time when they seem to be willing to cooperate with American libraries. Also I feel that if I am able to tell them nothing it will be more difficult to get various microfilms from them for which I have asked, in particular microfilms of the missing numbers of ~~the~~ Knuzhnaia Letopis'. Perhaps the reason I have had no answer from you is that it is long and slow to communicate through the State Department (Lowry is of the same opinion). A quicker way to write to me is to send the letter in an envelope addressed to Mr. Royce Lowry, c/o US Embassy Helsinki, by the regular air-mail. The letter will be pouched in from Helsinki. It seems that very often State is very slow in forwarding letters.

Since I want to get this letter in today's pouch, I will break off now, and write you again in a few days regarding my trip to Kiev and the Caucasus.

Sincerely yours,

note
p.s. Most of the Tashkent + Alma Ata publications are in Russian, not Uzbek or Kazakh.